

THE
POLITE PHILOSOPHER:
OR, AN
ESSAY ON THAT ART,
WHICH
Makes a Man HAPPY in Himself,
AND
AGREEABLE to Others.



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T H E

POLITE PHILOSOPHER.

METHOD requires that, in my entrance on this work, I should explain the nature of that science to which I have given the name of POLITE PHILOSOPHY; and, tho' I am not very apt to write methodically, yet, I think, it becomes me, on this occasion, to shew that my Title is somewhat a propos.

FOLKS who are skilled in Greek tell us, that Philosophy means no more than the Love of Wisdom, and I, by the adjunction of *polite*, would be understood to mean that sort of wisdom which teaches men to be at peace in themselves,

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and

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and neither by their words or behaviour to disturb the peace of others.

ACADEMICAL criticks may, perhaps, expect that I should, at least, quote some Greek sage or other, as the patron of that kind of knowledge which I am about to restore; and, as I pique myself on obliging every man in his way, I shall put them in mind of one ARISTIPPUS, who was professor of Polite Philosophy at Syracuse, in the days of the famous king Dionysius, in whose favour he stood higher than even Plato himself. Should they go farther, and demand an account of his tenets, I must turn them over to Horace, who has comprised them all in one line.

Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et status, et res.

Secure his soul preserv'd a constant frame,
Thro' ev'ry varying scene of life the same.

IN the court of the king of Sicily, this wise man enjoyed all the delights that would have satisfied a sensual mind; but it was the use of these which shewed him a true Philosopher: He was temperate in them, while he possessed them, and easy without them, when they were no longer in his power. In a word, he had the integrity of

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Diogenes, without his churlishness ; and, as his wisdom was useful to himself, so it render'd him agreeable to the rest of the world.

ARISTIPPUS had many pupils, but for the regular succession in his school, it has either not been recorded by the Greek writers, or, at least, by any of them that have come to my hands. Among the Romans, indeed, this kind of knowledge was in the highest esteem, and that at the time when the reputation of the common-wealth was at its greatest height. Scipio was less distinguished by the laurels he acquir'd from foreign conquests, than by the myrtle garland he wore as a professor in this art. The familiar letters of Cicero are so many short lectures in our science, and the life of Pomponius Atticus, a Praxis only on Polite Philosophy.

I would not be suspected to mention these great names, with an intent to display my learning ; far be it from me to write a satyr on the age : All I aim at, is to convince the Beaux Esprits of our times, that what I teach they may receive without disparagement, since they tread thereby in the same road with the greatest heroes of antiquity ; and, in this way, at least, emulate the characters of Alexander and Cæsar. Or, if those old-

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fashion'd commanders excite not their ambition, I will venture to assure them, that, in this track only, they will be able to approach the immortal prince EUGENE, who, glorious from his courage, and amiable from his clemency, is yet less distinguished by his Rank, than by his Politeness.

AFTER naming prince EUGENE, it would debase my subject to add another example; I shall proceed therefore to the taking notice of such qualities of the mind, as are requisite for my pupils to have, previous to the receipt of these instructions.

BUT, as vanity is one of the greatest impediments in the road of a POLITE PHILOSOPHER, and, as he who takes upon him to be a Preceptor, ought, at least, not to give an ill example to his scholars, it will not be improper for me to declare, that, in composing this piece, I had in my eye that precept of Seneca, "*Hæc aliis dic, ut dum dicis audias, ipse scribe, ut dum scripseris legas.*" Which, for the sake of the ladies, I shall translate into English; and into Verse, that I may gratify my own propensity to rhyming.

Speaking to others, what you dictate hear;
And learn yourself, while teaching you appear.

THUS

THUS you see me stript of the ill-obey'd authority of a pedagogue, and are, for the future, to consider me only as a school-fellow playing the master, that we may the better conquer the difficulties of our task.

To proceed then in the character, which, for my own sake, as well as yours, I have put on, let me remind you in the first place:

THAT Reason, however antique you may think it, is a thing absolutely necessary in the composition of him who endeavours at acquiring a philosophic Politeness; and let us receive it as a maxim, that, without Reason, there's no being a Fine Gentleman.

HOWEVER, to soften, at the same time that we yield to this constraint, I tell my blooming audience with pleasure, that Reason, like a fop's under-waistcoat, may be wore out of sight, and, provided it be but worn at all, I shall not quarrel with them, tho' vivacity, like a laced shirt, be put over, to conceal it: For, to pursue the comparison, our minds suffer no less from Indiscretion, than our bodies from the injuries of weather.

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NEXT to this, another out-of-the-way qualification must be acquired, and that is Calmness. Let not the smarts of the university, the sparks of the fide-boxes, or the genteel flutterers of the drawing-room, imagine, that I will deprive them of those elevated enjoyments, drinking tea with a Toast, gallanting a Fan, or roving, like a butterfly, through a parterre of Beauties: No, I am far from being the author of such severe institutions; but am, on the contrary, willing to indulge them in their pleasures, as long as they preserve their Senses. By which I would be understood to mean, while they act in character, and suffer not a fond inclination, an aspiring vanity, or a giddy freedom, to transport them into the doing any thing, which may forfeit present advantages, or entail upon them future pain.

I shall have frequent occasion, in the following pages, to shew, from examples, of what mighty use Reason, and an Undisturbed Temper, are to men of great commerce in the world, and therefore shall insist no farther on them here.

THE last disposition of the soul which I shall mention, as necessary to him who would become a proficient in this science, is Good-Nature,

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a quality, which, as Mr. Dryden said in a dedication to one of the best-natur'd men of his time, deserves the highest esteem, tho' from an unaccountable depravity both of taste and morals, it meets with the least. For can there be any thing more amiable in human nature, than to think, to speak, and to do, whatever good lies in our power unto all? No man who looks upon the Sun, and who feels that chearfulness which his beams inspire, but would rather wish himself like so glorious a being, than to resemble the Tyger, however formidable for its fierceness, or the Serpent hated for his hissing, and dreaded for his sting. Good-Nature may, indeed, be made almost as diffusive as day-light; but short are the ravages of the Tyger, innocent the bite of a Serpent, to the vengeance of a cankered Heart, or the malice of an envenomed Tongue. To this let me add another argument in favour of this benevolence of soul, and farther persuasions will, I flatter myself, be unnecessary: Good-Nature adorns every perfection a man is master of, and throws a veil over every blemish which would otherwise appear. In a word, like a skilful Painter, it places his virtues in the fairest light, and casts all his Foibles into shade.

THUS, in a few words, Sense, Moderation, and Sweetness are essential to a Polite Philosopher: and if you think you can't acquire these, even lay my book aside; but before you do that indulge me yet a moment longer. Nature denies the first to few, the second is in every man's power, and no man need be without the last, who either values general esteem, or is not indifferent to publick hate. For, to say truth, what is necessary to make an honest man, properly applied, would make a polite one; and as almost every one would take it amiss, if we should deny him the first appellation, so you may perceive from thence, how few there are, who, but from their own indiscretion, may deserve the second. It is want of attention, not capacity, which leaves us so many brutes; and, I flatter myself, there will be fewer of this species, if any of them can be prevailed on to read this piece. A description of their faults is to such the fittest lecture, for few monsters there are who can bear viewing themselves in a glass.

Our follies, when display'd, ourselves affright,
 Few are so bad, to bear the hideous fight.
 Mankind, in herds, thro' force of custom stray,
 Mislead each other into error's way;
 Pursue the road, forgetful of the end,
 Sin by mistake, and without thought offend.

Mx

My readers who have, perhaps, been many of them accustomed to think Politeness rather an ornamental accomplishment, than a thing necessary to be acquired in order to an easy and happy life, may, from thence, pay less attention than my instructions require, unless I can convince them they are in the wrong. In order to which, I must put them in mind, that the tranquillity, and even felicity of our days, depends as strongly on small things, as on great; of which men may be easily convinced, if they but reflect how great uneasiness they have experienced from cross accidents, altho' they related but to Trifles; and, at the same time, remember, that Disquiet is, of all others, the greatest evil, let it arise from what it will.

Now, in the concerns of life, as in those of fortune, numbers are brought into, what are called, bad circumstances, from small neglects, rather than from any great errors in material affairs. People are too apt to think lightly of shillings and pence, forgetting that they are the constituent parts of a pound, until the deficiency in the greater article, shew them their mistake, and convince them, by fatal experience, of a truth,

truth, which they might have learned from a little attention, viz. that great sums are made up of small.

EXACTLY parallel to this, is that wrong notion which many have, that nothing more is due from them to their neighbours, than what results from a principle of honesty, which commands us to pay our debts, and forbids us to do injuries: whereas a thousand little Civilities, Complacencies, and Endeavours to give others pleasure, are requisite to keep up the relish of life, and procure us that affection and esteem, which every man, who has a sense of it, must desire. And in the right timing, and discreet management of these Punctilios, consists the essence of what we call Politeness.

How many know the general rules of art,
Which unto tablets human form impart?
How many can depict the rising brow,
The nose, the mouth, and ev'ry feature shew?
Can, in their colours, imitate the skin,
And, by the force of fire, can fix them in.
Yet, when 'tis done, unpleasing to the sight,
Tho' like the picture, strikes not with delight:
'Tis ZINK alone gives the enamell'd face
A polish'd sweetness, and a glossy grace.

EXAMPLES

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EXAMPLES have, generally speaking, greater force than precepts; I will therefore delineate the characters of HONORIUS and GARCIA, two gentlemen of my acquaintance, whose humours I have perfectly considered, and shall represent them without the least exaggeration.

HONORIUS is a person equally distinguished by his Birth and Fortune. He has, naturally, good Sense, and that too hath been improved by a regular education. His wit is lively, and his morals without a stain.—Is not this an amiable character? Yet HONORIUS is not beloved. He has, some way or other, contracted a notion, that it is beneath a man of honour, to fall below the height of truth in any degree, or on any occasion whatsoever. From this principle, he speaks bluntly what he thinks, without regarding the company who are by. Some weeks ago, he read a lecture on female hypocrisy before a married couple, tho' the lady was much suspected on that head. Two hours after, he fell into a warm declamation against Simony and Priestcraft, before two dignitaries of the church. And, from a continued course of this sort of behaviour, hath rendered himself dreaded as a monitor, instead of being esteemed as a friend.

GARCIA,

GARCIA, on the contrary, came into the world under the greatest disadvantages. His Birth was mean, and his Fortune not to be mentioned: yet, tho' he is scarce forty, he has acquired a handsom estate in the country, and lives on it with more reputation, than most of his neighbours. While a Servitor at the University, he, by his assiduities, recommended himself to a noble lord, and thereby procured a place of fifty pounds a year in a publick office. His behaviour there made him as many friends as there were persons belonging to that board. His readiness in doing favours gained him the hearts of his inferiors, his deference for those in the highest characters in the office, procured him their good will, and the complacency he express'd towards his equals, and those immediately above him, made them espouse his interest with almost as much warmth as they did their own. By this management, in ten years time, he rose to the possession of an office, which brought him in a thousand pounds a year salary, and near double as much in perquisites. Affluence hath made no alteration in his manners. The same easiness of disposition attends him in that fortune to which it has raised him, and he is, at this day, the delight of all who know him,

him, from an art he has of perswading them, that their pleasures and their interests are equally dear to him with his own. Who, if it were in his power, would refuse what HONORIUS possesses? and who would not wish that possession accompanied with GARCIA's disposition?

I flatter myself, that, by this time, most of my readers have acquired a tolerable idea of Politeness, and a just notion of its use in our passage through life: I must, however, caution them of one thing, that, under pretence of Politeness, they fall neither into a Contempt or Carelessness of Science.

A man may have much learning without being a Pedant: nay, it is necessary that he should have a considerable stock of Knowledge, before he can be polite. The gloss is never given till the work is finished; without it, the best wrought piece looks clumsy: but varnish over a rough board is a preposterous daub. In a word, that rule of Horace, "Miscere utile dulci," so often quoted, can never be better applied, than in the present case, where neither of the qualities can subsist without the other.

With dress, for once, the rule of life we'll place,
Cloth is plain sense, and polish'd breeding lace,

Men

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Men may, in both, mistake the true design,
Fools oft are tawdry, when they would be fine.
An equal mixture, both of use and show,
From giddy fops, points the accomplish'd beau.

HAVING now gone through the Præcognita of Polite Philosophy, 'tis requisite we should descend with greater particularity into its several branches.

For tho' exactness would not be of a piece, either with the nature or intent of this work, yet some order is absolutely necessary, because nothing is more unpolite than to be obscure. Some philosophers have, indeed, prided themselves in a mysterious way of speaking, wrapping their maxims in so tough a coat, that the kernel, when found, seldom atoned for the pains of the finder.

THE polite Sage thinks in quite a different way. Perspicuity is the garment in which his conceptions appear; and his sentiments, if they are of any use, carry this additional advantage with them, that scarce any labour is required in attaining them. Graver discourses, like Gale-nical medicines, are often formidable in their figure, and nauseous in their taste. Lectures from a doctor in our science, like a chymical
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extraction, convey knowledge, as it were, by drops, and restore sense, as the other does health, without the apparatus of physick.

Harsh to the heart, and grating to the ear,
 Who can reproof, without reluctance, hear?
 Why against priests the gen'ral hate so strong,
 But that they shew us all we do is wrong?
 Wit well applied, does weightier wisdom right,
 And gives us Knowledge, while it gives Delight.
 Thus on the Stage we, with applause, behold,
 What wou'd have pain'd us from the Pulpit told.

It is now time to apply, what we have already advanced, to those points in which they may be the most useful to us; and therefore we will begin by considering what advantage the practice of them will procure, in respect to those three things, which are esteemed of the greatest consequence in the general opinion of the world. This leads me, in the first place, to explain the sentiments and conduct of a Polite Philosopher, in regard to Religion. I am not ignorant, that there are a multitude of those who pass both on the world, and on themselves, for very polite persons, who look on this as a topick below their notice. Religion, say they with a sneer, is the companion of melancholy minds; but, for
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the gayer part of the world, it is ill manners to mention it amongst them. Be it so. But give me leave to add, that there is no ranker species of ill breeding, than speaking of it sarcastically, or with contempt.

“RELIGION, strictly speaking, means that
“ worship which men, from a sense of duty,
“ pay to that Being, unto whom they owe their
“ own existence, with all those blessings and
“ benefits which attend it.”

LET a man but reflect on this definition, and it will be impossible for him not to perceive, that treating this in a ludicrous way, must not only be unpolite, but shocking. Who, that has a regard for a man, would not start at the thoughts of saying a base thing of his father before him? And yet, what a distance is there between the notion of a Father and a Creator! Since therefore no farther arguments are necessary to prove the inconsistency between Raillery and Religion, what can be more cogent to a polite man, than thus shewing, that such discourses of his would be mal a propos?

THUS much for those who might be guilty of Unpoliteness, with respect to Religion in general,

ral, a fault unaccountably common in an age which pretends to be so polite.

As to particular religions, or rather tenets in religion, men are generally warm in them, from one of these two reasons, viz. tenderness of conscience, or a high sense of their own judgments. Men of plain parts, and honest dispositions, look on salvation as too serious a thing to be jested with: a polite man therefore will be cautious of offending upon that head, because he knows it will give the person, to whom he speaks, Pain, a thing ever opposite to the character of a polished Philosopher. The latter reason, which I have assigned for mens zeal in religious matters, may seem to have less weight than the first; but he who considers it attentively, will be of another opinion. Men of speculative religion, who are so from the conviction rather of their heads than their hearts, are not a grain less vehement than the real devotees. He who says a slight, or a severe thing of their faith, seems, to them, to have thereby undervalued their understandings, and will, consequently, incur their aversion, which no man of common sense would hazard for a lively expression, much less a person of good breeding, who should make it his chief aim to be well

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with all. As a mark of my own Politeness, I will here take leave of this subject, since, by dropping it, I shall oblige the gay part of my readers, as, I flatter myself, I have already done the graver part, from my manner of treating it.

Like some grave matron of a noble line,
 With awful beauty does Religion shine.
 Just sense should teach us to revere the dame;
 Nor, by imprudent jests, to spot her fame.
 In common life you'll own this reas'ning right,
 That none but fools in gross abuse delight:
 Then use it here——nor think our caution vain,
 To be polite, men need not be profane.

NEXT to their concerns in the other world, men are, usually, most taken up with the concerns of the Publick here. The love of our country is among those virtues, to which every man thinks he should pretend: and the way in which this is generally shewn, is by falling into, what we call, Parties; where, if a large share of good sense allay not that heat, which is naturally contracted from such engagements, a man soon falls into all the violences of Faction, and looks upon every one as his enemy, who does not express himself about the publick good in the same terms he does. This is a harsh picture,

ture, but it is a just one, of the far greater part of those who are warm in political disputes. A polite man will therefore speak, as seldom as he can, on topicks, where, in a mixt company, it is almost impossible to say any thing that will please all.

To say truth, Patriotism, properly so called, is, perhaps, as scarce in this age, as in any that has gone before us. Men appear to love themselves so well, that it seems not altogether credible, they should, at every turn, prefer their country's interest to their own. The thing looks noble indeed, and therefore, like a becoming habit, every body would put it on. But this is hypocrisy, you'll say, and therefore should be detected! Here the Polite Philosopher finds new inducements to caution: sore places are always tender, and people at a masquerade are in pain, if you do any thing which may discover their faces.

OUR philosophy is not intended to make a man that sour monitor who points out folks faults, but to make them in love with their virtues; that is, to make himself and them easy while he is with them, and to do or say nothing, which, on reflection, may make them less his friends at their next meeting.

LET us explain this a little farther. The rules we offer are intended rather to guide men in Company, than when Alone : what we advance tends not so directly to amend people's hearts, as to regulate their conduct ; a matter which we have already demonstrated to be of no small importance. Yet I beg you'll observe, that tho' Morality be not immediately our subject, we are far, however, from requiring any thing in our pupils contrary thereto.

A POLITE man may yet be religious, and, if his reason be convinced, attached to any interest which, in his opinion, suits best with that of the publick, provided he conforms thus far to our system, that, on no occasion, he trouble others with the articles of his religious creed, or political engagements ; or, by any stroke of wit or railery, hazard for a laugh, that disposition of mind, which is absolutely necessary to make men easy when together.

WERE I, indeed, to indulge my own sentiments, I should speak yet with greater freedom on this subject : since there is so vast a disproportion, when we come to compare those who have really either a concern in the government,

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or the service of their country more particularly at heart, and the men who pretend to either merely from a desire of appearing of some consequence themselves. We ought, certainly, to avoid making one of this number, and aim, rather, at being quiet within ourselves, and agreeable to those among whom we live, let their political notions be what they will: inasmuch as this is a direct road to happiness, which all men profess they would reach, if they could. POMONIUS ATTICUS, whose character appears so amiable, from the concurring testimony of all who mention him, owed the greatest part of that esteem in which he lived, and of that reputation by which he still survives, unto his steady adherence to this rule. His benevolence made him love mankind in general, and his good sense hindered him from being tainted with those party-prejudices which had bewitch'd his friends. He took not up arms for CÆSAR, nor did he abandon Italy when POMPEY withdrew with his forces, and had, in outward form, the sanction of the commonwealth. He saw too plainly the ambition of both: yet he preserved his complacency for his friends in each party, without siding with either. Success never made them more welcome to POMONIUS, nor could any defeat lessen them in his esteem. When victorious, he

visited them, without sharing in their power; and, when vanquished, he received them, without considering any thing but their distress. In a few words, he entertained no hopes from the good fortune of his friends, nor suffered the reverse of it to chill his breast with fear. His equanimity produced a just effect, and his universal kindness made him universally beloved.

I FANCY this picture of a disposition, perfectly free from political sourness, will have an agreeable effect on many of my readers, and prevent their falling into a common mistake, that the circumstances of publick affairs, and the characters of publick persons, are the properest topicks for general conversation: whereas they never consider, that it is hard to find a company, wherein some body or other hath not either liking or distaste, or has received injuries or obligations from those who are likeliest to be mentioned upon such occasions; and who, consequently, will be apt to put a serious construction on a slight expression, and remember afterwards in earnest, what the speaker meant so much a jest, as never to have thought of it more. These, perhaps, may pass, with some, for trivial remarks; but with those who regard their own ease, and have at all observed what con-
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duces to make men disagreeable to one another,
I flatter myself, they will have more weight.

BEHAVIOUR is like architecture, the symmetry of the whole pleases us so much, that we examine not into its parts, which if we did, we should find much nicety required in forming such a structure; tho', to persons of no taste, the rules of either art would seem to have little connection with their effects.

That true Politeness we can only call,
Which looks like JONES'S * fabrick at Whitehall:
Where just proportion we, with pleasure, see,
Tho' built by rule, yet from all stiffness free.
Tho' grand, yet plain, magnificent, not fine,
The ornaments adorning the design.
It fills our minds with rational delight,
And pleases on reflection, as at sight.

AFTER these admonitions, as to Religion and Politicks, 'tis very fit we observe another topick of modern discourse, of which it is hard to say, whether it be more common, or more contrary to true politeness. What I mean, is the reflecting on mens professions, and playing on those general aspersions, which have been fixt on them

* Banqueting-house.

by a sort of ill-nature hereditary to the world : and with this, as the third point which I promised to consider, shall be shut up the more serious part of this essay.

IN order to have a proper idea of this point, we must, first of all, consider, that the chief cause both of love and hatred, is Custom. When men, from a long habit, have acquired a facility of thinking clearly, and speaking well in any science, they, naturally, like that better than any other ; and this liking, in a short time, grows up to a warmer affection, which renders them impatient whenever their darling science is decried in their hearing. A polite man will have a care of ridiculing physick before one of the faculty, talking disrespectfully of lawyers while gentlemen of the long-robe are by, or speaking contemptibly of the clergy when with any of that order.

SOME criticks may, possibly, object that these are solecisms of too gross a nature, for men of tolerable sense or education to be guilty of : But I appeal to those who are most conversant in the world, whether this fault, glaring as it is, be not committed every day.

THE strictest intimacy can never warrant freedoms of this sort, and it is, indeed, preposterous to think it should, unless we can suppose injuries are less evils when they are done us by friends, than when they come from other hands.

Excess of wit may oftentimes beguile:

Jests are not always pardon'd—by a smile,

Men may disguise their malice at the heart,

And seem at ease——tho' feeling inward smart.

Mistaken we——think all such wounds, of course,

Reflection cures——alas ! it makes them worse.

Like scratches they with double anguish seize,

Rankle with time, and fester by degrees.

LET us now proceed to speak of raillery in general. Invective is a weapon worn as commonly as a sword, and, like that, is often in the hands of those who know not how to use it. Men of true courage fight but seldom, and never draw but in their own defence. Bullies are continually squabbling, and, from the ferocity of their behaviour, become the terror of some companies, and the jest of more. This is just the case with such as have a liveliness of thought, directed by a propensity to ill nature : indulging themselves at the expence of others, they, by degrees, incur the dislike of all. Meek tempers abhor, men of
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cool dispositions despise, and those addicted to choler chastise them. Thus a licentiousness of tongue, like a spirit of rapine, sets one man against all; and the defence of reputation, as well as property, puts the human species on regarding a malevolent babler with a worse eye than a common thief, because Fame is a kind of goods, which, when once taken away, can hardly be restored. Such is the effigy of this human serpent: and who, when he has considered it, would be thought to have sat for the piece?

IT is a thousand to one my book feels the resentment of DRACO, from his seeing his own likeness in this glass.

A GOOD family, but no fortune, threw DRACO into the army when he was very young. Dancing, fencing, and a smattering of French, are all the education either his friends bestowed, or his capacity would allow him to receive. He has been now two years in town, and from swearing, drinking, and debauching country wenches, (the general rout of a military rake) the air of St. JAMES's has given his vices a new turn. By dint of an embroider'd coat, he thrusts himself into the beau coffee-houses, where a dauntless effrontery,

tery, and a natural volubility of tongue, conspire to make him pass for a fellow of wit and spirit.

A BASTARD ambition makes him envy every great character ; and as he has just sense enough to know, that his qualifications will never recommend him to the esteem of men of sense, or the favour of women of virtue, he has thence contracted an antipathy to both ; and, by giving a boundless loose to universal malice, makes continual war against Honour and Reputation, wherever he finds them.

HECATILLA is a female firebrand, more dangerous, and more artfully vindictive than DRACO himself. Birth, wit, and fortune combine to render her conspicuous, while a splenetick envy sours her, otherwise amiable, qualities, and makes her dreaded as a poison doubly dangerous, grateful to the taste, yet mortal in effect. All who see HECATILLA at a visit, where the brilliancy of her wit heightens the lustre of her charms, are, imperceptibly, deluded into a concurrence with her in opinion, and suspect not dissimulation under the air of frankness, nor a studied design of doing mischief in a seemingly casual stroke of wit. The most sacred character, the most exalted station, the fairest reputation, defend not against
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the infectious blast of sprightly raillery ; borne on the wings of wit, and supported by a blaze of beauty, the fiery vapour withers the sweetest blossoms, and communicates to all who hear her, an involuntary dislike to those at whose merit she points her satyr.

At ev'ning thus the unsuspecting swain
Returning homewards o'er a marshy plain,
Pleas'd, at a distance, sees the lambent light,
And, hasty, follows the mischievous sprite,
Through brakes and puddles, over hedge and stile,
Rambles, misguided, many a weary mile.
Confus'd, and wond'ring at the space he's gone,
Doubts, then believes, and hurries faster on :
The cheat detected, when the vapour's spent,
Scarce he's convinc'd, and hardly can repent.

NEXT to these cautions with respect to raillery, which, if we examine strictly, we shall find no better than a well-bred phrase for speaking ill of folks, it may not be amiss to warn our readers of a certain vehemence in discourse exceedingly shocking to others, at the same time that it not a little exhausts themselves.

If we trace this error to its source, we shall find that the spring of it is an impatience at finding others differ from us in opinion : And can there

there be any thing more unreasonable, than to blame that disposition in them, which we cherish in ourselves ?

If submission be a thing so disagreeable to us, why should we expect it from them ? Truth only can justify tenaciousness in opinion. Let us calmly lay down what convinces us, and, if it is reasonable, it will hardly fail of perswading those to whom we speak. Heat begets heat, and the clashing of opinions seldom fails to strike out the fire of dissension.

As this is a foible more especially incident to the fair sex, I think it will be highly necessary to offer another, and, perhaps, a more cogent argument to their consideration. Passion is a prodigious enemy to beauty ; it ruffles the sweetest features, discolours the finest complexion, and, in a word, gives the air of a Fury to the face of an Angel. Far be it from me to lay restraints upon the ladies, but, in dissuading them from this method of enforcing their sentiments, I put them upon an easier way of effecting what they desire ; for what can be denied to beauty, when speaking with an air of satisfaction ? Complacence does all that vehemence would extort, as anger can alone abate the influence of their charms.

Serene

Serene and mild we view the evening air,
 The pleasing picture of the smiling fair,
 A thousand charms our sev'ral senses meet,
 Cooling the breeze, with fragrant odours sweet.
 But sudden if the sable clouds deform
 The azure sky, and threat the coming storm,
 Hasty we flee——e'er yet the thunders roar,
 And dread what we so much admir'd before.

'To Vehemence in discourse; let me join Redundancy in it also, a fault flowing rather from carelessness than design, and which is more dangerous, from its being more neglected. Passion, as I have hinted, excites opposition; and that very opposition, to a man of tolerable sense, will be the strongest reproof for his inadvertency: whereas a person of a loquacious disposition, may often escape open censure from the respect due to his quality, or from an apprehension in those with whom he converses, that a check would but increase the evil, and, like curbing a hard-mouth'd horse, serve only to make him run the faster; from whence the person in fault is often rivetted in his error, by mistaking a silent contempt for profound attention.

PERHAPS this short description may set many of my readers right, which, whatever they may think

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think of it, I assure them is of no small importance. Conversation is a sort of Bank, in which all who compose it have their respective shares. The man therefore who attempts to engross it, trespasses upon the rights of his companions; and whether they think fit to tell him so, or no, will, of consequence, be regarded as no fair dealer. Notwithstanding I consider conversation in this light, I think it necessary to observe, that it differs from other copartnerships in one very material point, which is this, that it is worse taken if a man pays in more than his proportion, than if he had not contributed his full quota, provided he be not too far deficient: for the prevention of which, let us have HORACE's caution continually in our eye.

The indiscreet with blind aversign run
Into one fault, when they another shun.

It is the peculiar privilege of the Fair, that, speaking or silent, they never offend. Who can be weary of hearing the softest harmony? or who, without pleasure, can behold beauty, when his attention is not diverted from her charms by listening to her words? I would have stopt here, but that my deference for the Ladies obliges me to take notice, that some of their own sex, when
past

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past the noon of life, or in their wane of power, from some other reason, are apt to place an inclination of obliging their hearers amongst those topicks of detraction, by which they would reduce the lustre of those stars that now gild the hemisphere, where they once shone.

FROM this cause only, I would advise the reigning Toasts, by an equality of behaviour, to avoid the censure of these ill-natur'd tatlers.

Such hapless fate attends the young and fair,
Expos'd to open force, and secret snare :
Pursu'd by men, warm with destructive fire,
Against their peace, while female frauds conspire.
Escap'd from those, in vain they hope for rest :
What fame's secure from an invidious jest ?
By flight the deer, no more of dogs afraid,
Falls by a shot from some dark covert made.
So envious tongues their foul intentions hide,
Wound, tho' unseen, and kill e'er they're descry'd.

OF all the follies which men are apt to fall into, to the disturbance of others, and lessening of themselves, there is none more intolerable than continual Egotisms, and a perpetual inclination to self-panegyrick. The mention of this weakness is sufficient to expose it, since, I think, no man was ever possess'd of so warm an affection for
his

his own person, as deliberately to assert, that it, and its concerns, are proper topicks to entertain company. Yet there are many who, through want of attention, fall into this vein, as soon as the conversation begins to acquire life: they lay hold of every opportunity of introducing themselves, describing themselves, and, if people are so dull as not to take the hint, of commending themselves: nay, what is more surprizing than all this, they are amaz'd at the coldness of their auditors, forgetting that the same passion inspires almost every body, and that there is scarce a man in the room who has not a better opinion of himself, than of any body else.

DISQUISITIONS of this sort into human nature belong properly unto sages in Polite Philosophy; for the first principle of true Politeness is, not to offend against such dispositions of the mind, as are almost inseparable from our species. To find out, and methodize these, requires no small labour and application. The fruits of my researches on this subject I communicate freely to the publick; but must, at the same time, exhort my readers to spare, now and then, a few minutes to such reflections, which will, at least, be attended with this good consequence, that it will

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open a scene which hath Novelty, that powerful charm, to recommend it.

BUT I must beware of growing serious again. I am afraid my gravity may have disobligh'd some of the Beau-monde already.

He who intends t' advise the young and gay,
Must quit the common road—the formal way
Which hum-drum pedants take to make folks wise,
By praising virtue, and decrying vice.
Let parsons tell what dreadful ills will fall
On such as listen when their passions call :
We from such things our pupils to affright,
Say not they're Sins, but that they're Unpolite.
To shew their courage, Beaus wou'd often dare,
By blackest crimes to brave old Lucifer.
But who, of breeding nice, of carriage civil,
Wou'd trespass on good manners for the devil,
Or, merely to display his want of fear,
Be damn'd hereafter, to be laugh'd at here.

It cannot be expected from me, that I should particularly criticize on all those foibles, through which men are offensive to others in their behaviour: perhaps too, a detail of this kind, however exact, might be thought tedious, it may be, construed into a breach of those rules, for a strict observance of which I contend. In order there-

fore

fore to diversify a subject, which can no other way be treated agreeably, permit me to throw together a set of characters I once had the opportunity of seeing, which will afford a just picture of these marplots in conversation, and which my readers, if they please, may call the Assembly of Impertinents,

THERE was a coffee-house in that end of the town where I lodged some time ago, at which several gentlemen used to meet of an evening, who, from a happy correspondence in their humours and capacities, entertain'd each other agreeably from the close of the afternoon, till it was time to go to bed.

ABOUT six months this society subsisted with great regularity, tho' without any restraint: every gentleman who frequented the house, and had conversed with the erectors of this occasional club, were invited to pass an evening, when they thought fit, in a room one pair of stairs set apart for that purpose.

THE report of this meeting drew one night, when I had the honour of being here, three gentlemen of distinction, who were so well known to most of the members, that admittance

could not be refused them. One of them, whom I chuse to call major RAMBLE, turn'd of three-score, and who had an excellent education, seiz'd the discourse about an hour before supper, and gave us a very copious account of the remarks he had made in three years travels through Italy. He began with a geographical description of the dominions of his Sardinian majesty, as duke of Savoy ; and, after a digression on the fortifications of Turin, in speaking of which he shewed himself a perfect engineer, he proceeded to the secret history of the intrigues of that court, from the proposal of the match with Portugal, to the abdication of king VICTOR AMADEUS. After this he run over the general history of Milan, Parma and Modena, dwelt half an hour on the adventures of the last duke of Mantua, gave us a hasty sketch of the court of Rome, transferr'd himself from thence to the kingdom of Naples, repeated the insurrection of MASSANIELLO, and, at a quarter before ten, finished his observations with the recital of what happened at the reduction of that kingdom to the obedience of the late emperor. What contributed to make this conduct of his the more out of the way, was, that every gentleman in the room had been in Italy as well as he ; and one of them, who was a merchant, was the very per-

person, at whose house the major resided when at Naples. Possibly, he might imagine the knowledge they had in those things might give them a greater relish for his animadversions ; or, to speak more candidly, the desire of displaying his own parts, buried every other circumstance in oblivion.

JUST as the Major had done speaking, a gentleman called for a glass of water, and happen'd to say, after drinking it, that he found his constitution much mended, since he had left off malt-liquor. Doctor HECTIC, another of the strangers, immediately laid hold of this opportunity, and gave us a large account of the virtues of water, confirming whatever he advanced from the works of the most eminent physicians. From the main subject, he made an easy transition to medicinal baths and springs ; nor were his searches bounded by our own country, he condescended to acquaint us with the properties of the springs of Bourbon, particulariz'd the genuine smell of Spa water, applauded the wonderful effects of the Pyrmont Mineral, and, like a true patriot, wound up his disquisitions with preferring Astrop wells (within three miles of which he was born) to them all. It was now turned of eleven, when

the Major and Doctor took their leaves, and went away together in a hackney-coach.

THE company seem'd inclinable to extend their usual time of sitting, in order to divert themselves after the night's fatigue: When Mr. PAPILIO, the third new comer, made two or three severe reflections on the oddity of some people's humours, who were for imposing their own idle conceits, as things worthy the attention of a whole company; tho', at the same time, their subjects were trivial, and their manner of treating them insipid. For my part, continued he, gentlemen, most people do me the honour to say, that few persons understand Medals better than I do. To put the musty stories of these queer old men out of our heads, I'll give you the history of a valuable Medallion, which was sent me, about three weeks ago, from Venice. Without staying for any farther mark of approbation than silence, he enter'd immediately on a long dissertation; in which he had scarce proceeded ten minutes, before his auditors, losing all patience, followed the example of an old Turkey merchant, who, taking up his hat and gloves, went directly down stairs, without saying a word.

ANIMADVERSIONS on what I have related, would but trespass upon the patience of my readers; wherefore, in the place of them, let me offer a few remarks in verse, where my genius may be more at liberty, and vivacity atone for want of method.

Who would not choose to shun the gen'ral scorn,
And fly contempt?—a thing so hardly born.

This to avoid——let not your tales be long :

The endless speaker's ever in the wrong,
And all abhor intemperance of tongue. }

Tho' with a fluency of easy sounds,

Your copious speech with every grace abounds :

Tho' wit adorn, and judgment give it weight,

Discretion must your vanity abate,

E'er your tir'd hearers put impatience on,

And wonder when the larum will be down.

Nor think, by art, attention can be wrought,

A flux of words will ever be a fault.

Things without limit we, by nature, blame,

And soon are cloy'd with pleasure, if the same.

HITHERTO we have dwelt only on the blemishes of conversation, in order to prevent our readers committing such offences, as absolutely destroy all pretences to Politeness. But as a man cannot be said to discharge the duty he owes to

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society, who contents himself with barely doing nothing amiss ; so lectures on Polite Philosophy, after removing these obstacles, may reasonably be expected to point out the method whereby true Politeness may be obtained. But, alas ! that is not to be done by words. Rocks and tempests are easily painted, but the rays of Phœbus defy the pencil.

METHINKS I see my auditors in surprise. What, say they, have we attended so long in vain ? have we listened to no purpose ? Must we content ourselves with knowing how necessary a thing Politeness is, without being told how to acquire it ? Why, really, gentlemen, it is just so. I have done all for you that is in my power ; I have shewn you what you are not to be : In a word, I have explained Politeness negatively : If you would know it positively, you must seek it from company and observation. However, to shew my own good breeding, I will be your humble servant as far as I can ; that is, I'll open the door, and introduce you, leaving you then at the single point, where I can be of no farther use, *id est*, Application.

THE world is a great school, wherein men are first to learn, and then to practise. As fundamentals

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mentals in all sciences ought to be well understood, so a man cannot be too attentive at his first becoming acquainted with the publick : for experience is a necessary qualification in every distinguished character, and is as much required in a fine gentleman, as in a statesman. Yet it is to be remarked, that experience is much sooner acquired by some, than by others : for it does not consist so much in a copious remembrance of whatever has happened, as in a regular retention of what may be useful. As a man is properly stiled learned, from his making a just use of reading, and not from his having perused a multitude of books.

As soon as we have gained knowledge, we shall find the best way to improve it will be by Exercise, in which two things are carefully to be avoided, Positiveness and Affectation : If to our care in shunning them, we add a desire of obliging those with whom we converse, there is little danger, but that we become all we wish ; and Politeness, by an imperceptible gradation, will enter into our minutest actions, and give a lustre to every thing we do.

Near to the far extended coasts of Spain,
Some islands triumph o'er the raging main,
Where

Where dwelt of old—as tuneful poets say,
 Slingers, who bore from all the prize away.
 While infants yet—their feeble nerves they try'd
 Nor needful food, till won by art, supply'd.
 Fix'd was the mark—the youngster, oft in vain,
 Whirl'd the misguided stone with fruitless pain :
 Till, by long practice, to perfection brought,
 With easy slight their former task they wrought.
 Swift from their arm th' unerring pebble flew,
 And, high in air, the flutt'ring victim flew.
 So in each art men rise but by degrees,
 And days of labour lead to years of ease.

THE duke DE ROCHEFAUCAUT, who was esteemed the most brilliant wit in France, speaking of Politeness, says, That a citizen will hardly acquire it at court, and yet may easily attain it in the camp. I shall not enter into the reason of this, but offer my readers a shorter, pleasanter, and more effectual method of arriving at the summit of genteel behaviour ; that is, by conversing with the ladies.

THOSE who aim at panegyrick, are wont to assemble a throng of glittering ideas, and then, with great exactness, cloath them with all the elegance of language, in order to their making the most magnificent figure, when they come abroad in the world. So copious a subject as the

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praises of the Fair may, in the opinion of my readers, lay me under great difficulties in this respect. Every man of good understanding, and fine sense, is in pain for one who has undertaken so hard a task: hard, indeed, to me, who, from many years study of the sex, have discovered so many perfections in them, as scarce as many more years would afford me time to express. However, not to disappoint my readers, or myself, by foregoing that pleasure I feel in doing justice to the most amiable part of the creation, I will indulge the natural propensity I have to their service, and paint, tho' it be but in miniature, the excellencies they possess, and the accomplishments which, by reflexion, they bestow.

As when some poet, happy in his choice
Of an important subject——tunes his voice
To sweeter sounds, and more exalted strains,
Which from a strong reflection he attains.

As HOMER, while his heroes he records,
Transfuses all their fire into his words.

So we, intent, the charming sex to please,
Act with new life, and an unwonted ease,
Beyond the limits of our genius soar,
And feel an ardor quite unknown before.

THOSE who, from wrong ideas of things, have forced themselves into a dislike of the sex, will
be

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be apt to cry out, Where would this fellow run? Has he so long studied women, and does he not know what numbers of affected prudes, gay coquettes, and giddy impertinents there are amongst them?—Alas! gentlemen, what mistakes are these? How will you be surpriz'd if I prove to you, that you are in the same sentiments with me, and that you could not have so warm resentments at these Peccadilloes, if you did not think the ladies more than mortal?

ARE the faults you would pass by in a friend, and smile at in an enemy, crimes of so deep a dye in them, as not to be forgiven? And can this flow from any other principle, than a persuasion, that they are more perfect in their nature than we, and their guilt the greater therefore, in departing, even in the smallest degree, from that perfection? Or can there be a greater honour to the sex, than this dignity, which even their enemies allow them, to say, "Truth, Virtue, and Women owe less
" to their friends, than to their foes;" since the vicious, in both cases, charge their own want of taste on the weakness of human nature, pursue grosser pleasures because they are at hand, and neglect the more refined, as things of which their capacities afford them no idea.

Born

Born with a servile gust to sensual joy,
 Souls of low taste the sacred flame destroy,
 By which, allied to the etherial fire,
 Celestial views the hero's thoughts inspire :
 Teach him in a sublimer path to move,
 And urge him on to glory and to love ;
 Passions which only give a right to fame,
 To present bliss, and to a deathless name.
 While those mean wretches, with just shame o'er-
 spread,
 Live on unknown—— and are, unheard-of, dead.

MR. DRYDEN, who knew human nature, perhaps, as well as any man who ever studied it, has given us a just picture of the force of female charms, in the story of CYMON and IPHIGENIA. BOCCACE, from whom he took it, had adorned it with all the tinsel finery an Italian composition is capable of: The English poet, like most English travellers, gave Sterling silver in exchange for that superficial gilding, and bestowed a moral, where he found a tale. He paints in CYMON a soul buried in a confusion of ideas, informed with so little fire, as scarce to struggle under the load, or afford any glimmerings of sense. In this condition, he represents him struck with the rays of IPHIGENIA's beauty ; kindled by them, his mind

exerts

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exerts its powers, his intellectual faculties seem to awake, and that uncouth ferocity of manners, by which he had hitherto been distinguished, gave way to an obliging behaviour, the natural effect of love !

THE Moral of this Fable is a truth which can never be inculcated too much. It is to the Fair Sex we owe the most shining qualities of which ours is master : as the Ancients insinuated with their usual address by painting, both the Virtues and Graces as females. Men of true taste feel a natural complaisance for women when they converse with them, and fall, without knowing it, upon every art of pleasing, which is the disposition at once the most grateful to others, and the most satisfactory to ourselves. An intimate acquaintance with the other Sex, fixes this Complacency into a Habit, and that Habit is the very essence of Politeness.

NAY, I presume to say, Politeness can be no other way attained. Books may furnish us with right ideas, Experience may improve our judgments, but it is the acquaintance of the Ladies only, which can bestow that easiness of address, whereby

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whereby the Fine Gentleman is distinguished from the Scholar, and the Man of Business.

THAT my readers may be perfectly satisfied in a point, which I think of so great importance, let us examine this a little more strictly.

THERE is a certain constitutional Pride in men, which hinders their yielding in point of Knowledge, Honour, or Virtue to one another : This immediately forsakes us at the sight of Woman : And the being accustomed to submit to the ladies, gives a new turn to our ideas, and opens a path to reason, which she had not trod before ; things appear in another light, and that degree of Complacency seems now a Virtue, which heretofore we regarded as a Meanness.

I HAVE dwelt the longer on the charms of the Sex, arising from the perfection visible in their exterior composition, because there is the strongest analogy between them, and the excellencies which, from a nicer inquiry, we discover in the minds of the fair. As they are distinguished from the robust make of Man by that delicacy, express'd by nature in their form ; so the severity of masculine sense is softened by a sweetness

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ness peculiar to the female soul. A native capacity of pleasing attends them through every circumstance of life, and, what we improperly call, the Weakness of the Sex, gives them a superiority unattainable by Force.

THE Fable of the North-wind and the Sun contending to make the man throw off his cloak, is not an improper picture of the specifick difference between the powers of either sex. The blustering fierceness of the former, instead of producing the effect at which it aimed, made the fellow but wrap himself up the closer; yet no sooner did the sun-beams play, than that which before protected, became now an incumbrance.

JUST so, that Pride which makes us tenacious in disputes between man and man, when applied to the Ladies, inspires us with an eagerness not to Contend, but to Obey.

To speak sincerely and philosophically, Women seem designed by Providence to spread the same splendour and chearfulness through the intellectual oeconomy, that the celestial bodies diffuse over the material part of the creation. Without them, we might, indeed, contend, destroy,

destroy, and triumph over one another: Fraud and Force would divide the world between them, and we should pass our lives, like slaves, in continual toil, without the prospect of pleasure or relaxation.

It is the conversation of Women that gives a proper bias to our inclinations, and, by abating the Ferocity of our passions, engages us to that Gentleness of deportment, which we stile Humanity. The tenderness we have for them softens the ruggedness of our own nature, and the virtues we put on to make the better figure in their eyes, keep us in humour with ourselves.

I SPEAK it without affectation or vanity, that no man has applied more assiduously than myself to the study of the fair sex, and I aver it with the greatest simplicity of heart, that I have not only found the most engaging and most amiable, but also the most generous and most heroick qualities, amongst the Ladies; and that I have discovered more of candour, disinterestedness, and fervour in their friendships, than in those of our own sex, tho' I have been very careful, and particularly happy in the choice of my acquaintance.

My readers will, I dare say, observe, and indeed I desire they should, a more than ordinary zeal for inculcating a high esteem of, and a sincere attachment to the Fair. What I propose from it is, to rectify certain notions, which are not only destructive of all Politeness, but, at the same time, detrimental to society, and incompatible with the dignity of human nature. These have, of late years, spread much amongst those who assume to themselves the title of fine gentlemen; and, in consequence thereof, talk with great freedom of those, from whom they are in no danger of being called to an account. There is so much of baseness, cowardice, and contempt of truth in this way of treating such, as are alone capable of making us truly and rationally happy, that to consider the crime, must be sufficient to make a reasonable man abhor it. Levity is the best excuse for a transient slip of this kind; but to persist in it, is evidently descending from our own species, and as far as we are able, putting on the Brute.

Fram'd to give joy, the lovely sex are seen,
 Beauteous their form, and heav'nly in their mien :
 Silent, they charm the pleas'd beholder's sight,
 And speaking, strike us with a new delight :

Words

Words when pronounc'd by them bear each a dart,
 Invade our ears, and reach thro' them the heart.
 To no ill ends the glorious passion sways,
 By love and honour bound, the youth obeys;
 Till, by his service won, the grateful fair
 Consents, in time, to ease the lover's care,
 Seals all his hopes, and, in the bridal kiss,
 Gives him a title to untainted bliss.

I chuse to put an end to my lecture on Politeness here, because, having spoke of the ladies, I would not descend again to any other subject. In the current of my discourse, I have taken pains to shew the use and amiableness of that art which this Treatise was written to recommend; and have drawn, in as strong colours as I was able, those solecisms in behaviour, which men, either through giddiness, or a wrong turn of thought, are most likely to commit.

PERHAPS the Grave may think I have made Politeness too important a thing, from the manner in which I have treated it: Yet, if they will but reflect, that a Statesman in the most august assembly, a Lawyer of the deepest talents, and a Divine of the greatest parts, must notwithstanding have a large share of Politeness, in

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order to engage the attention, and bias the inclinations of his hearers, before he can persuade them, they'll be of another opinion, and confess that some care is due to acquiring that Quality which must set off all the rest.

THE gayer part of my readers may, probably, find fault with those restraints which may result from the rules I have here laid down: But I would have these gentlemen remember, that I point out a way whereby, without the trouble of Study, they may be enabled to make no despicable figure in the world, which, on mature deliberation, I flatter myself, they will think no ill exchange. The Ladies will, I hope, repay my labours, by not being displeas'd with this offer of my service. And thus, having done all in my power towards making folks agreeable to one another, I please me with the hopes of having procured a favourable reception for myself.

When gay Petronius, to correct the age,
Gave way, of old, to his satyrick rage;
This motely form he for his writings chose,
And chequer'd lighter verse with graver prose.
When, with just malice, he design'd to shew;
How far unbounded vice, at last, would go,
In prose we read the execrable tale,
And see the face of sin without a veil ;

But

But when his soul, by some soft theme inspir'd,
The aid of tuneful poetry requir'd,
His numbers with peculiar sweetness ran,
And in his easy verse we see the man.
Learn'd without pride, of taste correct, yet free
Alike from niceness, and from pedantry:
Careless of wealth, yet liking decent shew,
In fine, by birth a wit, by trade a beau.
Freely he censur'd a licentious age,
And him I copy, tho' with chaster page;
Expose the evils in which brutes delight,
And shew how easy 'tis to be Polite.
Exhort our erring youth—to mend in time,
And lectures give for mem'ry's sake—in rhyme,
Teaching this art—to pass thro' life at ease,
Pleas'd in ourselves, while all around we please.

F I N I S.

